

Whereas students in charter schools nationwide have similar demographic characteristics as students in all public schools;

Whereas charter schools have enjoyed broad bipartisan support from the Administration, the Congress, State governors and legislatures, educators, and parents across the Nation; and

Whereas charter schools are laboratories of reform and serve as models of how to educate children as effectively as possible: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) acknowledges and commends the charter school movement for its contribution to improving our Nation's public school system;

(2) designates the week beginning on April 30, 2000, and ending on May 6, 2000, as "National Charter Schools Week"; and

(3) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe the week by conducting appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to demonstrate support for charter schools in communities throughout the Nation.

PERSECUTION OF 13 IN IRAN'S JEWISH COMMUNITY

Mr. GORTON. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 109 introduced earlier today by Senators SCHUMER, BROWNBACK, and others.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 109) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the ongoing persecution of 13 members of Iran's Jewish community.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today to denounce—in the strongest terms possible—the sham trial of 13 Jews in Iran accused of espionage. And I want to thank my colleagues for voting unanimously for a Concurrent Resolution urging President Clinton to condemn this mockery of justice and violation of fundamental human rights, and make clear to Iran that the United States and the world is watching the fate of these men very closely.

Leaders in Tehran must know that the treatment of the Jews on trial will go far in determining the nature of Iran's relations with the U.S., and its standing in the community of nations.

The 13 Iranian Jews, mostly community and religious leaders in the cities of Shiraz and Isfahan, were arrested more than a year ago by the Iranian authorities and accused of spying for the U.S. and Israel. These espionage charges are, of course, preposterous.

Indeed, how could they be true? Jews in Iran are prohibited from holding any positions that would grant them access to state secrets or sensitive materials. And most of these men live hundreds of miles from Tehran.

This mockery of truth and justice reached new lows this week. After a year in prison—isolated, no contact with family or friends, no contact with even a lawyer—three of these men were dragged from the darkness of one of Iran's harshest prisons and stuck in front of cameras to publicly "confess" to their charges.

No-one is fooled. In fact, the world is appalled.

These men were presumed guilty before their trials even began. That's because they are in the hands of the hard-line Clerics in Iran, who run the Revolutionary Courts. And, as we know, in Iran, the Clerics are never wrong.

This is an Inquisition, not a trial.

What we are really witnessing is a high-stakes attempt at a bait and switch. After forcing confessions to capital crimes, the Revolutionary Court judge—who, by the way, also serves as prosecutor, chief investigator, and jury—may dole out "light" sentences on the 13 men, to show how "forgiving" the Clerics are.

Our Resolution makes it perfectly clear that these innocent men should not be used as pawns in a shifty battle of egos in Iran. They should be released immediately.

The case of the 13 Jews is showing the world how far Iran needs to go before they may even begin to expect to be welcomed into the community of nations.

That is why countless nations and all leading international human rights organizations have expressed their concern for the 13 Iranian Jews, and have denounced the abuse of their fundamental human rights.

The United States recently presented Iran with goodwill overtures, such as lifting restrictions on many Iranian imports and easing travel restrictions between our two countries. We learned this week that goodwill gestures are meaningless.

Truth be told, Iran has continued to display nothing but hostility and contempt for the United States and everything for which we stand.

At a minimum, Iran must show signs of respecting human rights as a prerequisite for our improving relations with them. I am pleased that Secretary of State Albright has identified the case of the 13 Jews in Iran as "one of the barometers of United States-Iran relations."

The same standards should hold true for international financial institutions. Iran's quest for \$130 million from the World Bank must not be taken seriously unless and until Iran begins to show a basic understanding of basic rules of justice.

Much has been made of President Mohammad Khatami's popular reform movement, and there is significant optimism that a kinder, gentler Iran is slowly emerging from the darkness of a

20-year hardline clerical dictatorship. Indeed, Khatami has received a huge mandate from the people of Iran over the past four years.

However, Iran must fully understand that normalized relations with the United States is only a pipedream if persecution such as that enacted upon the 13 Jews accused of spying goes unchallenged. If it does not, then what kind of reform movement are we really witnessing?

Colleagues, I thank you for supporting this Resolution urging the President to use all his resources to convince President Khatami that this farcical trial leading to a pre-ordained outcome will send US-Iran relations back to ground zero. Three of these men have already been tried and convicted without a shred of evidence. There are 10 more left to go. They should not spend one more day in prison. They should be released right now.

Today, the voice of the United States Senate has spoken. And we have said unanimously: "Iran, the world is watching."

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to; that the preamble be agreed to; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 109) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 109

Whereas on the eve of the Jewish holiday of Passover 1999, 13 Jews, including community and religious leaders in the cities of Shiraz and Isfahan, were arrested by the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and accused of spying for the United States and Israel;

Whereas three of 13 defendants were tried in the first week in May 2000, in trials that were closed to all independent journalists, outside media, international observers, and family members;

Whereas no evidence was brought forth at these trials other than taped "confessions", and no formal charges have yet been filed;

Whereas Jews in Iran are prohibited from holding any positions that would give them access to state secrets;

Whereas the judge in the case also serves as prosecutor, chief investigator, and arbiter of punishment;

Whereas United States Secretary of State Albright has identified the case of the 13 Jews in Shiraz as "one of the barometers of United States-Iran relations";

Whereas countless nations and leading international human rights organizations have expressed their concern for the 13 Iranian Jews and especially their human rights under the rule of law;

Whereas President Mohammad Khatami was elected on a platform of moderation and reform;

Whereas the United States has recently made goodwill overtures toward Iran, including lifting restrictions on the import of Iranian foodstuffs and crafts, promising steps toward the return of assets frozen since 1979,

and easing travel restrictions, all in an attempt to improve relations between the two countries;

Whereas the World Bank is currently considering two Iranian projects, valued at more than \$130,000,000, which have been on hold since 1993; and

Whereas Iran must show signs of respecting fundamental human rights as a prerequisite for improving its relationship with the United States and becoming a member in good standing of the world community: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that the President should—

(1) condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the arrest of the 13 Iranian Jews and the unfair procedures employed against them leading up to, and during, their trials, and demand their immediate release; and

(2) make it clear that—

(A) Iran's treatment of the Jews on trial is a benchmark for determining the nature of current and future United States-Iran relations, and that concessions already made may be rescinded in light of Iran's conduct of these cases; and

(B) the outcome of these cases will help determine Iran's standing in the community of nations, and its eligibility for loans and other financial assistance from international financial institutions.

MANUFACTURED HOUSING IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. GORTON. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to consideration of Calendar No. 517, S. 1452.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A Senate bill (S. 1452) to modernize the requirements under the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 and to establish a balanced consensus process for the development, revision, and interpretation of Federal construction and safety for manufactured homes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS; REFERENCES.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “Manufactured Housing Improvement Act of 2000”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents; references.
- Sec. 2. Findings and purposes.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.
- Sec. 4. Federal manufactured home construction and safety standards.
- Sec. 5. Abolishment of National Manufactured Home Advisory Council; manufactured home installation.
- Sec. 6. Public information.
- Sec. 7. Research, testing, development, and training.
- Sec. 8. Fees.
- Sec. 9. Dispute resolution.
- Sec. 10. Elimination of annual reporting requirement.

Sec. 11. Effective date.

Sec. 12. Savings provisions.

(c) *REFERENCES.*—Whenever in this Act an amendment is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to that section or other provision of the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5401 et seq.).

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

Section 602 (42 U.S.C. 5401) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 602. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

“(a) *FINDINGS.*—Congress finds that—

“(1) manufactured housing plays a vital role in meeting the housing needs of the Nation; and

“(2) manufactured homes provide a significant resource for affordable homeownership and rental housing accessible to all Americans.

“(b) *PURPOSES.*—The purposes of this title are—

“(1) to facilitate the acceptance of the quality, durability, safety, and affordability of manufactured housing within the Department of Housing and Urban Development;

“(2) to facilitate the availability of affordable manufactured homes and to increase homeownership for all Americans;

“(3) to provide for the establishment of practical, uniform, and, to the extent possible, performance-based Federal construction standards for manufactured homes;

“(4) to encourage innovative and cost-effective construction techniques for manufactured homes;

“(5) to protect owners of manufactured homes from unreasonable risk of personal injury and property damage;

“(6) to establish a balanced consensus process for the development, revision, and interpretation of Federal construction and safety standards for manufactured homes and related regulations for the enforcement of such standards;

“(7) to ensure uniform and effective enforcement of Federal construction and safety standards for manufactured homes; and

“(8) to ensure that the public interest in, and need for, affordable manufactured housing is duly considered in all determinations relating to the Federal standards and their enforcement.”.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 603 (42 U.S.C. 5402) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking “dealer” and inserting “retailer”;

(2) in paragraph (12), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (13), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(14) ‘administering organization’ means the recognized, voluntary, private sector, consensus standards body with specific experience in developing model residential building codes and standards involving all disciplines regarding construction and safety that administers the consensus standards through a development process;

“(15) ‘consensus committee’ means the committee established under section 604(a)(3);

“(16) ‘consensus standards development process’ means the process by which additions, revisions, and interpretations to the Federal manufactured home construction and safety standards and enforcement regulations shall be developed and recommended to the Secretary by the consensus committee;

“(17) ‘primary inspection agency’ means a State agency or private organization that has been approved by the Secretary to act as a design approval primary inspection agency or a production inspection primary inspection agency, or both;

“(18) ‘design approval primary inspection agency’ means a State agency or private organization that has been approved by the Secretary to evaluate and either approve or disapprove manufactured home designs and quality control procedures;

“(19) ‘installation standards’ means reasonable specifications for the installation of a manufactured home, at the place of occupancy, to ensure proper siting, the joining of all sections of the home, and the installation of stabilization, support, or anchoring systems;

“(20) ‘monitoring’—

“(A) means the process of periodic review of the primary inspection agencies, by the Secretary or by a State agency under an approved State plan pursuant to section 623, in accordance with regulations recommended by the consensus committee and promulgated in accordance with section 604(b), which process shall be for the purpose of ensuring that the primary inspection agencies are discharging their duties under this title; and

“(B) may include the periodic inspection of retail locations for transit damage, label tampering, and retailer compliance with this title; and

“(21) ‘production inspection primary inspection agency’ means a State agency or private organization that has been approved by the Secretary to evaluate the ability of manufactured home manufacturing plants to comply with approved quality control procedures and with the Federal manufactured home construction and safety standards promulgated under this title.”.

(b) *CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.*—The National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5401 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 613 (42 U.S.C. 5412), by striking “dealer” each place it appears and inserting “retailer”;

(2) in section 614(f) (42 U.S.C. 5413(f)), by striking “dealer” each place it appears and inserting “retailer”;

(3) in section 615 (42 U.S.C. 5414)—

(A) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “dealer” and inserting “retailer”;

(B) in subsection (b)(3), by striking “dealer or dealers” and inserting “retailer or retailers”; and

(C) in subsections (d) and (f), by striking “dealers” each place it appears and inserting “retailers”;

(4) in section 616 (42 U.S.C. 5415), by striking “dealer” and inserting “retailer”; and

(5) in section 623(c)(9), by striking “dealers” and inserting “retailers”.

SEC. 4. FEDERAL MANUFACTURED HOME CONSTRUCTION AND SAFETY STANDARDS.

Section 604 (42 U.S.C. 5403) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (a) and (b) and inserting the following:

“(a) *ESTABLISHMENT.*—

“(1) *AUTHORITY.*—The Secretary shall establish, by order, appropriate Federal manufactured home construction and safety standards, each of which—

“(A) shall—

“(i) be reasonable and practical;

“(ii) meet high standards of protection consistent with the purposes of this title; and

“(iii) be performance-based and objectively stated, unless clearly inappropriate; and

“(B) except as provided in subsection (b), shall be established in accordance with the consensus standards development process.

“(2) *CONSENSUS STANDARDS AND REGULATORY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.*—

“(A) *INITIAL AGREEMENT.*—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Manufactured Housing Improvement Act of 2000, the Secretary shall enter into a contract with an administering organization. The contractual agreement shall—